

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A conveyance unit configured and arranged to be used in an image forming apparatus ~~that comprises~~ having an image forming part ~~for forming~~ configured to form a visible image on a transfer material; and

an internal eject part provided above the image forming part within said image forming apparatus, wherein said conveyance unit is provided on a conveyance path from said image forming part to said internal eject part,

said conveyance unit comprising:

a transfer device that transfers the visible image, which is formed on an image carrier, onto the transfer material;

a fixing device that fixes the visible image transferred to the transfer material; and

an upward conveyance part that conveys and ejects the transfer material having a fixed visible image to the internal eject part,

wherein said transfer device, said fixation device and said upward conveyance part are incorporated into a single unit.

Claim 2 (Original): The conveyance unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein said upward conveyance part extends, when situated in said image forming apparatus, upwardly from an end of said conveyance unit and along a side of said internal eject part.

Claim 3 (Original): The conveyance unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the entire conveyance unit is configured and arranged to be removable from an interior of an apparatus body of said image forming apparatus through a front side of said apparatus body.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:

- an image forming part that forms a visible image on a transfer material;
- an internal eject part provided above the image forming part within said image forming apparatus; and
- a conveyance unit provided on a conveyance path from said image forming part to said internal eject part,

wherein said conveyance unit ~~comprises~~ includes:

- a transfer device that transfers the visible image, which is formed on an image carrier, onto the transfer material;
- a fixing device that fixes the visible image transferred to the transfer material;

and

- an upward conveyance part that conveys and ejects the transfer material having a fixed visible image to the internal eject part,

wherein said transfer device, said fixation device and said upward conveyance part are incorporated into a single unit.

Claim 5 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said upward conveyance part extends, when situated in said image forming apparatus, upwardly from an end of said conveyance unit and along a side of said internal eject part.

Claim 6 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the entire conveyance unit is configured and arranged to be removable from an interior of an apparatus body of said image forming apparatus through a front side of said apparatus body.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A structure of a front-side plate frame serving as a reinforcing member to reinforce a front side of an image forming apparatus, the image forming apparatus comprising that comprises:

an image forming part that forms a visible image on a transfer material;  
an internal eject part provided above the image forming part within said image forming apparatus; and

a conveyance unit provided on a conveyance path from said image forming part to said internal eject part,

wherein said conveyance unit ~~comprises~~ includes:

a transfer device that transfers the visible image, which is formed on an image carrier, onto the transfer material;

a fixing device that fixes the visible image transferred to the transfer material;  
and

an upward conveyance part that conveys and ejects the transfer material having a fixed visible image to the internal eject part,

wherein said transfer device, said fixation device and said upward conveyance part are incorporated into a single unit, and ~~wherein~~ said front-side plate frame is provided along a periphery of a front-side opening of said image forming part and has a protruding part extending upward along a side of said internal eject part and has an opening corresponding to an outer configuration of said conveyance unit, and wherein a reinforcing member is attached to said front-side plate frame at an area corresponding to a base of said protruding part, where a stress is concentrated when a load is applied to said front-side plate frame.

Claim 8 (Original): The structure of the front-side plate frame as claimed in claim 7, wherein said front-side plate frame is interposed between component parts of a frame member constituting an apparatus body of said image forming apparatus.

Claim 9 (Original): The structure of the front-side plate frame as claimed in claim 8, wherein said component parts of the frame member are pipe frames serving as columns of said frame member.

Claim 10 (Canceled)

Claim 11 (Original): The structure of the front-side plate frame as claimed in claim 10, wherein said reinforcing member is an L-shape bracket.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The structure of the front-side plate frame as claimed in claim 10, wherein an outer front cover covering the front side of said image forming part is configured to be a double door structure so that a center line of the double door passes through the base of said protruding part, and said reinforcing member is a bracket having a magnet for locking the outer front cover.

Claim 13 (Original): The structure of the front-side plate frame as claimed in claim 12, further comprising an interlock mechanism provided to said bracket so as to detect opening and closing of said outer front cover and control an operation of said image forming apparatus.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming part that forms a visible image on a transfer material;

an internal eject part provided above the image forming part within said image forming apparatus;

a conveyance unit provided on a conveyance path from said image forming part to said internal eject part, said conveyance unit including: a transfer device that transfers the visible image, which is formed on an image carrier, onto the transfer material; a fixing device that fixes the visible image transferred to the transfer material; and an upward conveyance part that conveys and ejects the transfer material having a fixed visible image to the internal eject part, wherein said transfer device, said fixation device and said upward conveyance part are incorporated into a single unit; and

a front-side plate frame serving as a reinforcing member to reinforce a front side of said image forming apparatus, said front-side plate frame provided along a periphery of a front-side opening of said image forming part and having a protruding part extending upward along a side of said internal eject part and having an opening corresponding to an outer configuration of said conveyance unit, and wherein a reinforcing member is attached to said front-side plate frame at an area corresponding to a base of said protruding part, where a stress is concentrated when a load is applied to said front-side plate frame.

Claim 15 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 14, wherein said front-side plate frame is interposed between component parts of a frame member constituting an apparatus body of said image forming apparatus.

Claim 16 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said component parts of the frame member are pipe frames serving as columns of said frame member.

Claim 17 (Canceled):

Claim 18 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said reinforcing member is an L-shape bracket.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein an outer front cover covering the front side of said image forming part is configured to be a double door structure so that a center line of the double door passes through the base of said protruding part, and said reinforcing member is a bracket having a magnet for locking the outer front cover.

Claim 20 (Original): The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 19, further comprising an interlock mechanism provided to said bracket so as to detect opening and closing of said outer front cover and control an operation of said image forming apparatus.